(c) the numbers and details of cases decided in favour of the Railways, the cases decided against the Railways and the cases in which decisions are pending;

(d) whether Government would consider the proposals for out-of-court settlement, if proposed;

(e) if so, the basis for the same; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) 2 structures at Kalyan, Mumbai i.e. one in Kalyan Railway colony, and one near Kalyan Railway yard have been demolished in 1998, being unauthorised structures.

(b) One.

(c) No case has been decided either in favour or against the Railways. One case pertaining to demolition at Kalyan, Mumbai is pending in Court at present.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

(f) Out of court settlement will not be in Railways' interest.

Railway Zonal General Managers' Financial Powers

723. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a decision has been taken recently to enhance, to nearly double, the limit of the Zonal General Managers' financial powers; and

(b) if so, the details of the enhanced limits proposed and the precise reasons/justification therefor, especially in the light of the contrary views of several committees and experts who have commented adversely against excessive concentration of powers in the Railway Board and suggested decentralisation of the decision-making process?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The powers of the General Managers have been enhanced recently. Major areas, where financial powers of the General Managers have been enhanced in the recent past, are indicated in the attached Statement (*See* below). The enhancement has been done in order to facilitate speedy execution of Railway projects and bring about further operational efficiency in day to day working. Also, a new fund namely, Special Railway Safety Fund with an outlay of Rs. 17000 crores, has been created for financing safety related works to be executed in a time frame of 5 years. For proper utilisation of the fund and completion of various works in the given time frame and taking into account the element of inflation it was considered necessary to enhance the existing powers of the General Managers. In the past, several Committees and experts like Railway Reforms Committee, Indian Institute of Public Administration, Railway Fare and Freight Committee also recommended enhancement in the powers of General Managers. The recent enhancement is in line with these recommendations, and not contrary to them. It is also mentioned here that delegation of powers is a continuous process and decisions to delegate powers, including various other aspects of field working, are taken from time to time, looking at the ground realities and specific needs of the Zonal Railways.

Statement

Railway Zonal General Managers' financial powers

Sl.	Area/Item	Previous powers	Enhanced powers
1.	Sanction of Detailed Estimate	Upto Rs. 10 crores in each case.	Upto Rs. 20 crores in each case.
2.	Award of Contract	Upto Rs. 8 crores in each case.	Upto Rs. 15 crores in each case.
3.	Engaging/Obtaining Consultancy Services from outside bodies	Upto Rs. 15 lakhs in each case with an annual ceiling of Rs. 75 lakhs.	(a) For Consultancy Services connected with property development schemes—Upto Rs. 50 lakhs in each case with an annual ceiling of Rs. 2.5 crores.

Sl. No.	Area/Item	Previous powers	Enhanced powers
			(b) For other cases—upto Rs. 15 lakhs in each case with an annual ceiling of Rs. 75 lakhs.
4.	To incur expenditure on works not included in the sanctioned Budget		
	(a) Machinery and Plant	Upto Rs. 5 lakhs each,	Upto Rs. 10 lakhs each,
	(b (i) Line Capacity Works	Upto Rs. 30 lakhs each,	Below Rs. 50 lakhs each,
	(ii) Other Works	Upto Rs. 25 lakhs each,	Upto Rs. 30 lakhs each,
	(c) Passenger Amenities Works	Upto Rs. 20 lakhs in each case,	Upto Rs. 30 lakhs in each case,
		Subject to the Budgetary ceiling of Rs. 3 cr. in a financial year.	Subject to the Budgetary ceiling of Rs. 6 cr. in a financial year.

Rolling Back of Simalguri-Moranhat Rail Line Project

724. SHRI DRUPAD BORGOHAIN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railway authorities have/propose to roll back the Simalguri-Moranhat rail line when there is the demand for extension of this line upto Dilerugar Town, by laying new line for 41 kms. only; and

(b) whether the Ministry would think over the matter seriously and take the necessary action in the coming budget?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.